

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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CALIFORNIA "DUCKLEGGER" GETS 2½ YR. JAIL SENTENCE, \$2500 FINE

The U. S. Government is cracking down hard on violators of laws forbidding the out-of-season shooting and the marketing of wild ducks.

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service disclosed today that the heaviest punishment on record for Migratory Bird Treaty Act violators was meted out last week in Federal Court, Sacramento, Calif., when Judge Dal M. Lemmon sentenced Donald E. Smith of Del Paso Heights, Calif., to 2½ years in jail and fined him \$2,500.

Smith was arrested February 14, trying to sell 829 wild ducks to U. S. game management agents posing as wholesale buyers. His arrest was made after three months of undercover investigations of a huge "ducklegging" ring by the Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Fish and Game Commission.

Smith plead guilty to five counts: killing 77 ducks on February 11, killing 376 ducks on February 12, killing 676 ducks on February 13, and selling and transporting 829 ducks on February 14.

Albert L. Ford of Yuba City, Calif., who was arrested with Smith, plead guilty to buying, selling and transporting wild ducks, and was fined \$1,800 and placed on probation for five years. The third member of the ring arrested February 14, E. L. Ziegler of Sacramento, plead not guilty, and is now awaiting a jury trial.

Charles O. Beuchamp, a Sacramento restaurateur, was fined \$385, after pleading guilty to buying 50 wild ducks from the Smith ducklegging ring.

Paul Young of Los Angeles, who plead guilty to a charge of offering to buy 210 wild ducks, was fined \$350.

Three others are now awaiting trials on similar charges arising from the intensive investigation of ducklegging in California.

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